



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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August 28, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wendy L. Watanabe", is written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – MICHELLE-
TRAVIS GROUP HOMES, INC. – 41st STREET SITE AND HOBART
SITE GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of 41st Street Site and Hobart Site Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department.

41st Street Site and Hobart Site Group Homes are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 10-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, 41st Street Site was providing services for five DCFS children and Hobart Site was providing services for two DCFS children.

Both Group Homes are located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of our review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. In addition, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address a few deficient areas. Specifically, both Group Homes need to encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo album/life books. In addition, 41st Street Site Group Home needs to repair a broken faucet in the bathroom and replace missing knobs on the dressers in the children's bedrooms. The 41st Street Group Home also needs to develop Needs and Services Plans that include input from all members of the treatment team. The Hobart Site Group Home needs to remove the writing on the television in bedroom two.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (213) 253-0301.

WLW:MMO:JET:DC:AA:bg

Attachment

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Ted Myers, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Curtis Brown, Board President, Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc.
Patricia J. Cole, Executive Director, Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc.
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc.
41st Street Site Group Home
Los Angeles, California 90008
License Number: 191801259
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

41st Street Site Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean, there is adequate furniture and lighting, and the Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the bathtub faucet is broken and leaking in bathroom one.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, the beds all have a full complement of linens, and children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, in all the bedrooms, the dresser drawers are missing the knobs.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Michelle-Travis Group Homes management:

- a. Repair the bathtub faucet in bathroom one.**
- b. Replace missing knobs on the dresser drawers in all the bedrooms.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals. However, all members of the treatment team are not included in the development or implementation of the NSPs.

Recommendation

- 2. Michelle-Travis Group Homes management include input from all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSPs.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

None.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

None.

V. Psychotropic Medication**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents****Comments:**

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

None.

VI. Personal Rights**Method of assessment – Interviews with children****Sample size: Two****Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

None.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, children are not encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 3. Michelle-Travis Group Homes management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

**Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc.
Hobart Site Group Home
Los Angeles, California 90062
License Number: 198202988
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Hobart Site Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean, there is adequate furniture and lighting, and the Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, the beds all have a full complement of linens, and children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, there is writing on the television in bedroom two.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

- 1. Michelle-Travis Group Homes management remove the writing from the television in bedroom two.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals.

Recommendation

None.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

None.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

None.

V. Psychotropic Medication**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents****Comments:**

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented and children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

None.

VI. Personal Rights**Method of assessment – Interviews with children****Sample size: Two****Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

None.

VII. Clothing and Allowance**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews****Sample size: Two****Comments:**

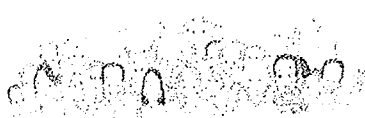
The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, children are not encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

- 2. Michelle-Travis Group Homes management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**



Executive Director
Patricia J. Cole, LCSW
October 22, 2008

Michelle-Travis Group Homes, Inc.

ATT: Candace Rhue, G. H. Audit Supervisor
Department of Auditor-Controller
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: CAP for 2008 Group Home Monitoring Report

AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION.....41ST STREET SITE

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Recommendations

1. Michelle Travis Group Homes, Inc. management:
 - a. Repair bathtub faucet in bathroom one
 - b. Replace missing knobs on BR dresser drawers

PLAN OF CORRECTION IMPLEMENTED 08/30/08---

a.—On 8/30/08 the bathtub faucet in bathroom #1 was replaced with a new one, purchased by Pat Cole, which was installed by our handyman.

b—On 8/30/08 the missing knobs on BR dresser drawers were replaced with new ones, purchased and installed by our handyman.

Currently the Administrator, Patricia Moore-Cole, reviews staff documentation monthly including form for "facility & environment" issues currently completed by the facility managers. In addition, beginning 9/29/08 Administrator will do visual follow-up to weekly facility manger report, on a monthly basis. SIR's will also be reviewed weekly that indicate any property damage and handyman will be called to repair within 4 working days.

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II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Recommendations

2. Michelle Travis Group Homes, Inc. management:

include input from all members of the treatment team in the development and implementation of the NSP's.

PLAN OF CORRECTION IMPLEMENTED 10/20/08---

The treatment team currently meets monthly and will now have a sign-in sheet attached to the notes. This will identify all in attendance. If youth, their CSW or any other member is absent, a reason will be documented in the notes. The notes and sign-in sheet will be the responsibility of Ms. Martin, facility manager.

In order to verify CSW signatures for NSP's, all will be faxed by Administrator, Pat Cole so that there is documentation of when it was sent.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Recommendations

3. Michelle Travis Group Home management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/lifebooks.

PLAN OF CORRECTION IMPLEMENTED 10/01/08---

3. We currently have at least one day a month scheduled to create/update lifebooks with residents. During that activity we will now have a sign-in sheet for each youth and indicate reason for absences. Any resident wishing to keep their books in their room will have to sign them out. All others will be maintained in the group home office. Ms. Nixon, lead Child Care Staff will be responsible for lifebooks and completion of required documentation.

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AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION....HOBART SITE

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Recommendations

1. Michelle Travis Group Home management remove the Writing from the television in bedroom two.

PLAN OF CORRECTION IMPLEMENTED 08/01/08---

- A. Staff C. Martin and maintenance man attempted to remove writing but were not successful, so TV was removed from bedroom and will be held in garage until resident leaves at which time it will be returned to him.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Recommendations

3. Michelle Travis Group Home management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/lifebooks.

PLAN OF CORRECTION IMPLEMENTED 10/01/08---

3. We currently have at least one day a month scheduled to create/update lifebooks with residents. During that activity we will now have a sign-in sheet for each youth and indicate reason for absences. Any resident wishing to keep their books in their room will have to sign them out. All others will be maintained in the group home office. Ms. Nixon, lead Child Care Staff will be responsible for lifebooks and completion of required documentation.

Patricia Cole, Director will ensure that this plan is implemented and adhered to.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia J. Cole, LCSW
Director